The Mountains About Williamstown

2677
6
13

George Lansing Raymond

Class PS2677
Book M6
Copyright No. 1913

COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT.

MAIN STREET, WILLIAMSTOWN, WHERE IT PASSES THROUGH THE COLLEGE GROUNDS *Frontispiece*

The Mountains About Williamstown

By George Lansing Raymond, L.H.D.
[Williams]

With an Introduction by
Marion Mills Miller, Litt.D. [Princeton]

With 33 Illustrations from Original Photographs Prepared by H. E. Kinsman, C. M. Dodd, and the Author

G. P. Putnam's Sons
New York London
The Knickerbocker Press
1913

PS2677
M6
1913

Copyright, 1913
by
GEORGE LANSING RAYMOND

The Knickerbocker Press, New York

©Cl.A357027

But in the east there lie sky-drifting hills,
    Their cliffs, cloud-coursed in heights of mystery,
Dim, dreamy glens, and flashed surprise of rills,
    Had trained in youth his faith and fantasy.
He loved them as a child may love his mother,
    A simple child who cannot tell you why,
Yet something feels he feels not for another,
    Too near the springs of life for question or reply.

A Life in Song, 7, 72; by the Author.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Introduction	1
Greylock	31
Berlin Mountain	43
West Mountain	58
Ford's Glen	80
A Woodland Reverie	82
Amid the Mountains	96

ILLUSTRATIONS

PAGE

Main Street, Williamstown, where it Passes through the College Grounds . . . . . *Frontispiece*

Thompson Chapel, Exterior 5

Thompson Chapel, Interior 7

Williams and Grace Halls 11

Interior of Grace Hall 13

Berkshire, Currier, and Fairweather Halls 17

Greylock, from Heartwellville, Vermont, at the Northeast . 33

The Notch between Williams and Prospect on Greylock Mountain Range 35

Easterly View across a Shoulder of Greylock 37

Western Entrance to Greylock's Hopper 39

PAGE

Prospect, Greylock, and Bald Mountains, with the Hopper . 41

Berlin Mountain, with West Mountain Range to the Right . 45

Hoosac and Greylock Ranges from Bee Hill 47

Entrance to Flora's Glen 49

Roadway through Torrey's Woods 51

Gymnasium, Morgan Hall, and Laboratories, with Berlin above 53

Dodd's Cone, with Berlin just beyond the Left 55

West Mountain Range Seen across Hoosick River . . . 59

The Hopper from the West 61

The Dome, East Mountain, and Williamstown, from Stone Hill 63

A Class-Day Speech between East College and the Library . 65

Main Street, Williamstown, Looking West 69

Foothills of West Mountain from the Side of it . . . 71

The Inner Hopper 73

The Greylock Range from Berkshire Rock 77

PAGE

Commencement Procession of the Graduating Class . . . 79

Ford's Glen 81

The Hopper Brook and Pathway 83

A Brook, with the Dome in the Distance 87

Mission Park Monument 89

A Walk in a Williamstown Park 95

The Greylock Range from Bellow's Pipe 97

Greylock, from a Shoulder of the Dome 99

The Mountains About Williamstown

INTRODUCTION

"Good wine needs no bush"—for those who are connoisseurs of wine. Good poetry similarly requires no introduction—for those who have a discriminating literary palate. Perhaps in ancient Greece, where poetic taste was natural and well-nigh universal, and where the "wine of song" in generous flood was welcomed because it gratified the artistic sense of people of every degree, presentation of the claims of a particular vintage may have been unneeded and unknown. But where this natural taste has been vitiated, whether by poetic counterfeiters flooding the market with their debased issue, and so driving out the genuine, or by the people themselves after indulging in the raw and ardent spirits of romantic fiction and passionate drama, there has always been need of instructing readers in the

basic principles of the poetic art preparatory to presenting them poems which, however unpretentious, are intended to appeal to the true artistic sense. So Wordsworth prefaced his products, and, following his example, the disciples of Wordsworth in introduction and comment urged the claims of these as true specimens of poetry upon a public accustomed to connote the idea of a "grand style" with any composition in rhythmic form.

The present age, notwithstanding an abundant, and, to a large extent, critical appreciation of most forms of art, is notable for its lack of interest in verse, and, with this, of discrimination in judging of its relative value. For this reason, no greater service can be rendered to the reader of literature than by presenting to him a work of genuine poetry, accompanied by the reasons which seem to make it this.

To say no more, such presentation may be the means of revealing—to eyes prone to overlook what they ought to see—the element of pure beauty, and of making men apprehend the supreme position that this occupies in literary as in other forms of art. Beauty is universally recognized as the main constituent of poetry. But after this has been acknowledged, many in our day seem to think it unnecessary to know from personal experience what is meant either by poetic beauty, or by enjoying it. "We agree to all your claims for poetry," they seem to say; "What more can you ask

of us?—pray, would you have us *read* it?" Professor Raymond's poems, we believe, will tend to multiply readers—and discriminating ones—of poetry in general, starting them, indeed, on the right road to the shrine of beauty, their devotion increasing with every step on the way.

In choice of subject, these mountain poems are admirably adapted for this purpose. Appreciation of the beauty of nature, especially in its larger and more striking aspects, appealing in unmistakable terms, as these do, to human emotion and sentiment, is almost universal. There are those, indeed, who traffic upon this appreciation. Hundreds of innkeepers in Europe receive annually from tourists—and these largely from America—many thousands of dollars because of the scenic attractions of their localities. The popularity of these, moreover, is always greatly enhanced when, in some way, they can be associated with the personalities of favorite authors who have dwelt among them and written of them,—written what, perhaps, is destined to be immortal largely because of some subtle influence exerted upon their minds by the ever-enduring beauty and grandeur of the aspects of nature in a place which was once their home.

Even utilitarians who think only of these facts may be guided along the right path. There is no one for whom it is impossible to open up the well-nigh infinite vistas of ideality which lie behind and beyond and within

the actualities of life. The contents of this volume, therefore, seem to appeal to every kind of reader, and to do so in the ancient universally cherished name of the Muses of which the author has been a faithful devotee ever since, as a college student, he became familiar with the scenes about Williamstown fitted for their haunting. Especially should the poems appeal to those who now live amid the Berkshire hills, in the list of whom are many young people whose whole careers might be changed for the better, could they but be guided to receive, assimilate, and develop the suggestions logically derivable from their surroundings.

As a pupil of Professor Raymond, and an assistant professor in his department of Æsthetic Criticism at Princeton—not to mention more recent associations with him—I have had exceptional opportunities to become acquainted with his poetic theories and methods, and, accordingly, it is I who have been asked to write the present introduction.

As is known to many, Professor Raymond was for years an instructor in elocution, rhetoric, and æsthetics. His fundamental analysis of each of these subjects led him to treat, first, of the significance—*i. e.* of the thought and emotion—to be expressed; and, second, of the style or form of the expression. Both these, as related merely to art, he considers of equal importance, and, accordingly, insists that neither should be subordinated

THOMPSON CHAPEL, EXTERIOR

to the other. He maintains, for instance, that the object of making a study of form, and of thus becoming a master of technique, is to remove habits preventing a spontaneous and natural method of communicating outwardly what is within the mind, and, in place of these, to cultivate habits facilitating this method. This, according to him, furnishes the reason for practicing the voice in music and the hand in painting, as well as the perceptive, recollective, and illustrative powers in these and the other arts.

There is nothing in statements of this kind to differentiate them from such as would be made by almost any one else. I have directed attention to them here because of certain practical applications of them to poetry which seem to be peculiar to Professor Raymond. The reader may be best led perhaps to apprehend what these applications are by observing, in the following poetic passage, the departures from the natural order of words as used in English speech:

> Then us they lifted up, dead weights, and bare
> Straight to the doors; to them the doors gave way
> Groaning; and in the vestal entry shrieked
> The virgin marble under iron heels.—*Tennyson's Princess.*

THOMPSON CHAPEL, INTERIOR

There are two main reasons for such departures: first, the difficulty, without them, of causing the lines to produce the required metrical effects; and, second, the desirability of arranging the words in such a way as to emphasize, by putting into unusual places, those words that have exceptional interpretive or artistic value, as in the cases of *us*, *groaning*, and *shrieked*, in the quotation.

The first reason Professor Raymond would not deem sufficient. He would consider it an attempt to excuse workmanship so lacking in thoroughness as to stop short of producing the naturalness of effect which, according to him, always characterizes perfect art. The second reason, he would admit, is founded on a sound æsthetic principle, but he would consider it also inadequate, since when words containing the important thoughts fall into emphasized places in the customary order of the sentence the effect is much more what it should be than when, in order to put the strong words in the strong places, inversion is used. Take the invocation of the Psalmist:

> Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
> And be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors;
> And the King of glory shall come in.

This is both more artistic and more poetic than would be the inversion:

> Your heads, O ye gates, lift up;
> And lifted up be ye, ye doors everlasting;
> And in shall come the One of glory King.

Professor Raymond would justify his criticism of such changes in the natural order of speech, so far as made merely for the purpose of overcoming the difficulty of metrical construction, by showing that many a reader, and even critic, after becoming accustomed to them, comes to consider them, in themselves alone, indicative of the presence of poetry, and not infrequently to consider the absence of them indicative of the opposite. According to him, this involves subordinating significance in poetry to the effects of mere style.

As for the second reason for these changes, Professor Raymond, though justifying them sometimes, would say that, at other times, even when directing attention to words having special significance, they may be inartistic because of their tendency to emphasize the particular details of expression in such a way as to cause the reader to lose thought of the general drift of expression, the latter of which is that which chiefly conveys the full meaning of a passage. Here, again, according to his conception, more

importance would be given to the requirements of poetic style than to those of significance.

Professor Raymond is well aware that any verse in which theories like his are put into practice will, very likely, not commend itself to those who fail to recognize poetry where there are no inversions or intricacies in the arrangement of words, or where the general drift of the thought is not being constantly checked in order to allow opportunity for the introduction of special details. He is aware that such people are wont to confound that ease and simplicity of effect which characterize finished art with the fatal facility that triumphs merely because it has not ventured where obstacles are to be met, and where skill must be used in order to overcome them. But he is not a man who would waive an artistic ideal for no other purpose than to find welcome with those who, for any reason, do not happen to share it.

After what has been said, the reader may be interested in noticing in a quotation from the present volume the straightforward arrangement of the words, the dominance of the main idea, and the absence of any tricks of mere rhetoric to which the effects could be attributed:

> The aspiration and the aim of art
> That will not bide contented till the law

WILLIAMS AND GRACE HALLS

> Of thought shall supersede the law of things,
> And that which in the midnight of this world
> Is but a dream shall be fulfilled in days
> Where there is no more matter, only mind,
> And beauty, born of free imagination,
> Shall wait but on the sovereignty of spirit.—p. 60.

The production of passages like this by a professor of rhetoric is all the more noteworthy inasmuch as one would naturally suppose that he, as a student of style, would be the first, rather than the last, to be unduly influenced by its requirements.

We have pointed out that, according to Professor Raymond, the details of expression should not predominate over the drift of expression. Let us look a little more deeply into this principle. We shall find that the conception indicated in the term "drift of expression," while it refers to the general thought, may refer—and at times necessarily must do so—to more than this. It must refer to the tendency, or what is sometimes termed the spirit of the thought. It is not only the general meaning, but the general spirit underlying the meaning, which should receive expression in the form. How this can be done may be illustrated, like other of Pro-

INTERIOR OF GRACE HALL

fessor Raymond's theories, from his own writings. Years ago, before he had published anything in dramatic form, like his "Columbus" or "Dante," the New York *Evening Post*, then edited by William Cullen Bryant, termed one of his volumes the work "of a genuinely dramatic poet." A careful reader of that volume will recognize what was meant by this comment. The volume contained two poems,—"Haydn" and "Ideals Made Real." Both were love stories; the one was supposed to be told by a dying nun, and the other by a young man very much alive. From beginning to end, the style of each poem revealed the character of its supposed narrator. Nevertheless each poem revealed also the characters of half a dozen other persons whose words and deeds were reported. Like leaves and flowers all of which, though rendered clearly distinguishable by their outlines, appear blue or red when seen through a blue or red glass, so these characters, though they were clearly differentiated from one another, all revealed the characteristics of the one supposed to be describing them. This is the same as to affirm that Professor Raymond had put himself into the place of the supposed narrators. He had been able, as one may say, to take on their spirit in such a way that, from beginning to end, all the details of style were made to manifest this fact.

A similar effect may be noticed in his patriotic ballads and senti-

mental lyrics. While, in a sense they represent himself, in another sense they represent also the spirit of some prejudiced rustic or love-sick suitor, to whom, supposedly, they are attributable.

The same dramatic quality is evident in the poems in this volume. The writer seems to possess, or, better, to be possessed by the spirit which—so far as results in material nature may be interpreted according to the analogy of results in human nature—is behind the natural phenomena to which he refers, *e. g.*:

> And only barren slopes of sterile rock
> And trees that nature struggles to disown
> Await the climber.—p. 69.
>
> The emulous mounts
> That rise, as if from crowds that would be counted.—p. 36.
>
> And pushing up through paths I trod were flowers.
> I seemed their nature's lord; for, when my feet
> Would crush them as I passed, they grew more sweet.—p. 84.
>
> [*When passing through a forest*] Without a word,
> We walked at first like pilgrims near a shrine
> They much revere, who, filled with thrills too fine

To throb through words accented, satisfy
Their souls by feeling that the god is nigh.—pp. 88, 89.

Professor Raymond is able also to represent the effects of nature upon the spirit of man as manifested in the thoughts and feelings which association with nature evokes. Who that has roamed much among high mountains has not experienced—but how few have been able to translate into language—the feelings expressed in a passage like this?—

And why should one descend? Why cannot now
This whirling world whisk off the willing spirit
And let it shoot through space, and go and go,
And never come again? Ah, why should fate
Leave thought entangled like an eagle here
Whose wings are bound, and feet can only crawl
So slowly, and, when one so longs to fly,
So painfully?—pp. 52, 54.

It is a step—and yet a long step—in the same direction as that indicated in these lines to the recognition of a single source or spirit in nature to which may be attributed not only inspiration in general, as in this last

BERKSHIRE, CURRIER, AND FAIRWEATHER HALLS, AND EAST COLLEGE

quotation, but also particular suggestions, as in the quotations preceding the last. Notice, in the following, not merely the recognition of this single spirit; but an effect far more difficult to produce,—the expression of this recognition in language fitted to cause others to recognize it:

> Life's greatest gain is life itself;
> And life, though lived in matter, is not of it;
> Not of the object that our aims pursue,
> Not of the body that pursues it, not
> Of all the world of which itself and us
> Are parts. Nay, all things that the eye can see
> Are but vague shadows of reality
> Cast on a frail environment of cloud,—
> But illustrations of a general trend
> Which only has enduring entity,
> And is, and was, and always must be, spirit.—pp. 56, 57.

> Believe me that the spirit-air,
> Like all the air above the soil we tread,
> Takes to its own environment of light
> No growth to burst there into flower and fruit

That does not get some start, and root itself,
Amid this lower world's deep, alien darkness,—
No spirit uses wings in heaven that never
Has learned of them, or longed for them, on earth.—p. 57.

For nature is
Transparent, and reveals her mysteries
To mortals only whose own sympathies
Make them transparent, opening all between
Themselves and nature, so that naught can screen
Her inmost meaning from their inmost mind.
Such spirits in earth's round horizon find
A glass divine—like that called Claude Lorraine's—
A strange strong lens that deep within contains
Heaven's forms for thought made small in scope to match
Man's comprehension.—pp. 89, 90.

For one to be able to perceive the spirit, in the sense of the vitalizing method or methods, operating in nature, and, at the same time, to recognize and represent the many different forms through which this spirit may manifest its presence and character, there is needed an unusual exercise of

two important tendencies of mind, clearly distinguishable yet closely connected. These are the philosophic and the imaginative. The first of them has to do with laws working underneath visible or audible life; the second with things seen or heard that give outward manifestation of the application of these laws. The test of the philosophic mind is its ability to relate the phenomena of nature to some one law or set of laws; the test of the imaginative mind is its ability to conjure from nature forms that image one another in the sense that they indicate the presence and influence upon themselves of the same law or laws. Both qualities of mind are exemplified, over and over again, in these mountain poems; sometimes explicitly as in the following:

> In every sphere, beyond what merely meets
> The first demand of need, there issues forth
> A constant overflow. 'T is this that brings
> More sunlight than the eye of toil exhausts,
> More summer rain than clears and cools the air
> Where smoke and flame the world's too heated axles.
> Without this overflow, no wish could play,
> No thought could dream, no fancy slip the links

Of logic, and wing off with childlike faith
And poise o'er mysteries too deep for sight.
Without it, not one poet would repeat
His empty echoes of life's humdrum work,
His rhythmic laughter of disburdened thought.
Without it, not one artist would essay
To mimic Nature when it molds to gems
Its melting worthlessness, or, like a wizard,
Waves with its wand to welcome bubbling froth
And turn to amber that which aimed for air.—pp. 44, 46.

Meantime, confined
Where only finite form can hint of what
Inspires formation, many souls there are—
Oh, may I join them!—who, in all things earthly,
Behold what evermore transfigures earth.
No scene can greet them but it brings to sight
Far less than to suggestion; not a tone
Whose harmony springs not from overtones;
And not a partial stir but, like a pulse,
It registers what heart-beat moves the whole.—p. 48.

And sometimes implicitly as in these:

> Does thought grow broader, whittled down to point
> At microscopic nuclei of dust,
> As if the world were by, not with them, built?—
> As if the game of true success were played
> By matching parts whose wholes are curios?—p. 56.

> Whose mind too slightly taught, as yet, perhaps,
> To read, beneath the picture, all the text,
> Has yet surmised its meaning by that faith
> Which, though its guide be instinct, dares to think,
> And, though it bow to greet the symbol, yet
> Lets not its magic cast a spell on sense!—p. 78.

On almost every page of Professor Raymond's poetry, a thinker will find single words and phrases that, like hand mirrors held to mountain ranges, reveal with the utmost clearness what could have its source in nothing except a wide philosophic and imaginative outlook, *e. g.*:

> As long as thinking can be shaped by things,
> And that which holds our life can mold our love.—pp. 38, 40.

That every bud must bring a blossom-nest
In which to hatch and home a future fruit.—p. 43.

But each frail flower that blooms for but an hour
May store in memory an ideal of beauty,
A sense of sweetness, that shall never leave him.—p. 74.

Some minds are sighted for a single aim,
And right for others may be wrong for them!—p. 70.

All things created can for thought procure
No more than one's creative thoughts conjure.—p. 89.

There are two extremes of representation at which the results of the two tendencies of mind of which I have spoken are combined; and at both of them Professor Raymond's success is noteworthy. At one extreme, the conception of the laws, principles, or general ideas involved, or the personified source of them, is so great that the imagination cannot find a form actually existing by imitating or referring to which the mind can represent them adequately,—in fact cannot represent them at all, except by way of suggestion, *e. g.*:

One might believe, O Mount, as on thy sides
The thumb-marks of the Hopper show themselves,
That thou wast made a handle, humpt and huge,
Which some magician of the sky could wield
While in the hollow basin at thy base
All things were lifted to a loftier life!—pp. 40.

They must have sprung
To shape like this when some primeval frost
Chilled, caught, and crystallized the storm-swept waves
Of chaos that, arrested in their rage,
They fitly might portray the power beneath.
Stay there, great billows, all your boulder-drops
Held harmless where they hang; and all the spray
That might have dashed above them merely leaves
Of bush and forest, held to equal pause
Save where, perchance, their fluttering, now and then,
Reveals a feeling that they once were free;
Stay there, suspended in the sky! But, sure
As days roll up the sun, an hour must come
When blazing blasts again shall shake these peaks,

Shall pile them higher, level them to plains,
Or melt them back to primal nothingness.—pp. 58, 60.

And when these mounts, like mighty sheets above
Some slumbering giant soon to wake and walk,
Fall back to formlessness from which they came.—p. 76.

This is the method which, in the degree in which it is applied to conceptions of profound importance, gives rise to the effects that are termed sublime. At the other extreme, the conception of the laws or principles involved is not too great to be adequately represented. In such a case, when the writer is thinking primarily of the conception, he gives us description or reference that is idealistic; when he is thinking primarily of the form, he gives us that which is realistic. Professor Raymond's poems afford examples of both types. These, for instance, are idealistic:

Where every prospect homes itself on high,
And each horizon seems a haunt of heaven?—p. 40.

Our shouts would join them, now, perchance, intent
To rouse loud echoes dealt us like applause
For ungrown voices that would fit themselves

To bear the burden of the larger thought
For which the world beyond our youth seemed waiting.—p. 64.

When dwelling in a realm of endless plains,
Those whom thy shade had haunted pointed out
The clouds, and bade me find thine image there,—
With what delight my heart first welcomed thee!
And then, like one whose form lies prone in sleep,
My young imagination woke and rose
And strove to climb, and—heaven alone can tell
How wisely—has been climbing ever since.—p.31.

I climbed these fields
From foot-hills to the Snow-hole; then, reclined
Against the western slope, looked off to give
A god-speed to the sun, and half believed
The blue-tint sky-sheet, held to light against
The little town of learning that I loved,
Could bear away with photographic art
That which should give enlightenment to all
The western land through which it should be trailed.—p. 62.

And these are realistic:

> Those overshadowing forests which emboss
> That glorious bowl, the Hopper!—p. 34.

> Think not that every leaf that sprouts in spring
> Must be a stem straight-pointed toward a flower.—p. 43.

> I strolled, at midnight, through the shade-veiled elms,
> Across the western rise, and down the hill.
> What mattered how complained the creaking bridge,
> Or bustling brook, disturbed by moon and me;
> How marshalled into rows the ghost-like forms,
> White-mantled in the hill-side cemetery?—p. 69.

It is quite common with Professor Raymond to begin a passage according to the realistic method, and to end it according to the idealistic, his imagination starting with feet on the ground, as it were, and then taking wing, *e. g.*:

> The works of human art may lose their charm.
> The picture, statue, building, wear no mail
> That can resist the subtle shafts of time.

Their brightest color fades, their bronze corrodes,
Their carving crumbles, and their marble falls.
Oft, too, when one has wandered far from home,
And craves the things he once thought wrought so well,
The soul's enlargement of the treasures missed
That each may fit a niche of larger longing
Will make all seem, when seen again, but small,
And, tested by the touch of present fact,
But fabrics of a dream conjured by fancy.
Not so with works of Nature. Years that pass
May make the field more brilliant with more flowers,
The ore more precious, and the cave more vast,
And every mount, at our renewed return,
Soar higher like thick smoke above a flame
Fanned into ardor by the panting breath
Of fleet-sped winds that rush to its embrace.—pp. 32, 34.

A similar order of presentation—passing from the realistic to the idealistic—often characterizes his descriptions of things seen:

Anon a brook before my vision spread.
It seemed a path that fairy feet could tread,—

A path of silver, o'er a jewelled ground,
Which far away toward heaven-like mountains wound.
White mists were clinging to the brook's bright side.
Like spirit bands I thought them, whom its tide
Lulled softly, couched amid the dark-leaved trees,
Awaiting bugles of the morning breeze,
And all the rush of daybreak sweeping by,
To bear them off in glory to the sky.—p. 85.

And also of things heard. Besides this fact, notice, in the following, the distinctively musical effects; by which are meant the effects both of sound, and of that of which the sound makes one think:

At times, mysterious whurs of winds and wings
And whisperings rose, with long-drawn echoings.
'T was music, lingering lovingly along
The breeze its fragrance freighted, like a song
From bay-bound barks in hazy autumn calms;
Nor less it swayed my soul than slow low psalms
Begun where organ blasts, that roared and rushed
And made the air-waves roll, are swiftly hushed,

And our thrilled breasts inhale as well as hear
The awe-filled sweetness of the atmosphere.—pp. 85, 86.

Thomas Noon Talfourd, in his celebrated essay "On the Genius and Writings of Wordsworth," says of the poetic imagination that it is "that power by which the spiritualities of our nature and the sensible images derived from the material universe are commingled at the will of the possessor." Hudson Maxim, in his "Science of Poetry," says that this art "is the expression of unsensuous thought in sensuous terms by artistic trope." Professor Raymond defines poetry merely by terming it an art, the medium of which is language. But, in his "Essentials of Æsthetics," he lets us know—to shorten somewhat that which he states under three heads—that "all fine art involves a use of the sights or sounds of nature for the purpose of expressing a man's thoughts or emotions in an external product." The general conception underlying all these statements is the same; and few would dispute its essential accuracy. Neither will the careful reader of this book question that Professor Raymond has conformed to this conception in every particular, thereby producing genuine works of art, deserving, as few recent poems deserve, a place among the classic compositions of their kind.

Marion Mills Miller.

The Authors Club, New York City.

The Mountains About Williamstown

GREYLOCK

FRIEND of my youth, my first of mountain friends,
Friend long before I saw thee, in the days
When, dwelling in a realm of endless plains,
Those whom thy shade had haunted pointed out
The clouds, and bade me find thine image there,—
With what delight my heart first welcomed thee!
And then, like one whose form lies prone in sleep,
My young imagination woke and rose
And strove to climb, and—heaven alone can tell
How wisely—has been climbing ever since.
With what delight, day after day, for years,

My eyes would watch thee looming through the light
Of early morn, and how they since have longed
For thee when absent! Nor, at any time—
Not after years had parted us—did not
The sight of thee outdo all expectation.

The works of human art may lose their charm.
The picture, statue, building, wear no mail
That can resist the subtle shafts of time.
Their brightest color fades, their bronze corrodes,
Their carving crumbles, and their marble falls.
Oft, too, when one has wandered far from home,
And craves the things he once thought wrought so well,
The soul's enlargement of the treasures missed
That each may fit a niche of larger longing
Will make all seem, when seen again, but small,
And, tested by the touch of present fact,
But fabrics of a dream conjured by fancy.
Not so with works of Nature. Years that pass

GREYLOCK, FROM HEARTWELLVILLE, VERMONT, AT THE NORTHEAST

"Those whom thy shade had haunted, pointed out
The clouds, and bade me find thine image there."—Page 31

May make the field more brilliant with more flowers,
The ore more precious, and the cave more vast,
And every mount, at our renewed return,
Soar higher like thick smoke above a flame
Fanned into ardor by the panting breath
Of fleet-sped winds that rush to its embrace.

And so with thee, O Greylock! Thou art yet
More grand, more beautiful, than when, of yore,
I sought thee, in that earliest rash attempt
To climb thy heights by scaling first the steeps
Of Prospect, pulled through thorny underbrush
From limb to limb, like some primeval man
When mounting rounds of some Ygdrasil tree;
Or when I tried that long, but shorter, course
That first essays Bald Mountain; or, again,
Sought first the Notch. To-day, as always, comes
That sense of restful triumph when one nears
Those overshadowing forests which emboss

THE NOTCH BETWEEN WILLIAMS AND PROSPECT ON GREYLOCK MOUNTAIN RANGE

"Nor at any time—
Not after years had parted us—did not
The sight of thee outdo all expectation."—Page 32

That glorious bowl, the Hopper!—when one treads
Those winding paths amid thick arching trees
Where, in the lack of outlook, naught can solve
The mystery of the height save lungs that breathe
The thrill and uplift of a purer air;
And where, like spirits that have been inspired
But never can be conscious how or when,
Keen thoughts will still outpace achievement, till,
All suddenly, upon the eye will burst
The unobstructed vision from thy peak,—
The hills that sweep from Adams at thy base
To far Monadnock and the emulous mounts
That rise, as if from crowds that would be counted,
Above the hardly hid Connecticut.

Oh, some may praise the plain! It has its use
For plow and reaper, railway and canal;
But all that human hand could ever plant
Or thought invent, or energy transport

EASTERLY VIEW ACROSS A SHOULDER OF GREYLOCK

"The unobstructed vision from thy peak,—
The hills that sweep from Adams at thy base."—Page 36

Could never, through long ages, bring together
What here were gathered in a few short hours,—
A wealth of mound and meadow to suffice
For many a county, all rolled up in one,
A hundred miles of surface in a score,
A score of climates in a single mile,
And all the treasury of plant or soil
From half a continent arrayed against
The slopes that flank a solitary valley.
Who says there are no wiser views of life
Where every view displays a wider range?
More blest a decade spent in scenes like this
Than ages in some never-ending plain.

And what of those here who can never climb
These heights, or gaze upon their heaven-like vision?—
Did ever yet a form appear on earth
Divine in mission that would fail to bless
Those, too, who could but touch its garment's hem?

WESTERN ENTRANCE TO GREYLOCK'S HOPPER

"As on thy sides
The thumb-marks of the Hopper show themselves."—Page 40

As long as thinking can be shaped by things,
And that which holds our life can mold our love,
What soul can seek the skies with wistful gaze
And be content with only soil below?
Oh, does it profit naught that one should dwell
Amid surroundings that no eyes can see
Save as they look above, no feet can leave,
To seek the outer world, save as they climb?
Where every prospect homes itself on high,
And each horizon seems a haunt of heaven?
One might believe, O Mount, as on thy sides
The thumb-marks of the Hopper show themselves,
That thou wast made a handle, humpt and huge,
Which some magician of the sky could wield
While in the hollow basin at thy base
All things were lifted to a loftier life!

How blest the child whose thought begins to build
Ideals of deeds on dreams that, morn by morn,

PROSPECT, GREYLOCK AND BALD MOUNTAINS, WITH THE HOPPER

"Where, like mighty sides
Of some far grander cradle, lift these hills."—Page 42

Awake to greet a mother's flushing face
That bends above his cradle! Many a soul
Reared in these valleys where, like mighty sides
Of some far grander cradle, lift these hills,
And where in bleakest wintry skies appears
Thy mountain's white brow warmed with flush of dawn,
Has waked to see thee, day by day, until
The habit grew a part of life itself
And ruled his being,—that whatever light
Left heaven or lit the earth would find his form
In paths where it was always moving upward.

BERLIN MOUNTAIN

THIS world is wider than the range of work,
Nor shows its worth through merely garnered gains.
Yon barren mount where only scrub-oaks grow
May yield, at times, a harvest for the soul
More blest than ever filled the best of farms.
Think not that every leaf that sprouts in spring
Must be a stem straight-pointed toward a flower;
That every bud must bring a blossom-nest
In which to hatch and home a future fruit.
Full many a leaf can only catch the shower
And quench the dry limb's thirst; full many a bud
Grow bright alone as might a short-lived spark
Aglow to show some source of kindled fragrance—

Aglow to show itself a part and partner
Of that excess of service in which all
The starry worlds are joined, as, hung beneath
Heaven's dome, like golden censers brimmed with fumes
Of smouldering myrrh, their God-enkindled fires
Now flash, now fail, while souls, awe-thrilled to thought,
Both trust and fear their fires' unfailing Source.

In every sphere, beyond what merely meets
The first demand of need, there issues forth
A constant overflow. 'T is this that brings
More sunlight than the eye of toil exhausts,
More summer rain than clears and cools the air
Where smoke and flame the world's too heated axles.
'T is this regales the hunger of fatigue
By foretastes of refreshment never failing,
And shows, beyond the prisons of this earth,
Through opening gates, the free expanse of heaven.
Without this overflow, no wish could play,

BERLIN MOUNTAIN, WITH WEST MOUNTAIN RANGE TO THE RIGHT

"Yon barren mount where only scrub-oaks grow
May yield, at times, a harvest for the soul."—Page 43

No thought could dream, no fancy slip the links
Of logic, and wing off with childlike faith
And poise o'er mysteries too deep for sight.
Without it, not one poet would repeat
His empty echoes of life's humdrum work,
His rhythmic laughter of disburdened thought.
Without it, not one artist would essay
To mimic Nature when it molds to gems
Its melting worthlessness, or, like a wizard,
Waves with its wand to welcome bubbling froth
And turn to amber that which aimed for air.
Without it, ah, without it, there would be
No life of life more grand by far than all
That worlds can outline or that minds conceive,—
No wings to lift aloft our thrilling souls
And bear them on, unconscious how or why,
Far past all limits of all earth-moved thought
Until, at last, they seem to reach the verge
Of heaven's infinity.

HOOSAC AND GREYLOCK RANGES FROM BEE HILL

"Beyond the prisons of this earth,
Through opening gates, the free expanse of heaven."—Page 44

Meantime, confined
Where only finite form can hint of what
Inspires formation, many souls there are—
Oh, may I join them!—who, in all things earthly,
Behold what evermore transfigures earth.
No scene can greet them but it brings to sight
Far less than to suggestion; not a tone
Whose harmony springs not from overtones;
And not a partial stir but, like a pulse,
It registers what heart-beat moves the whole.

So let this valley grow its flower and fruit.
So let the minds that fill the valley fare
On food they find in book and business.
Give me the flowerless leaf, the fruitless branch,
The mountain pushing up to barrenness,
The scrub-oak and the rock—and, oh, the view!
Away with work, and let me, free from care,
Mount on and up!—No weak distractions now;

ENTRANCE TO FLORA'S GLEN

"No wait at Flora's Glen; no word to hint
Her modest welcome and her wanton wiles!"—Page 50

No wait at Flora's Glen; no word to hint
Her modest welcome and her wanton wiles!
They seldom lured me in the past, and here—
Why, here, at present, look!—there lifts Bee Hill!
Come, serve with me, my day-long mountaineer,
Our short apprenticeship, and compass this
Before the longer climb that waits beyond;—
Ay, like an archer when he tries his bow,
Essay this littler bend; and, by-and-by,
Our limbs will limber for the larger aim.

Now tramp we up the last vale's long ascent;
Now, on the narrow ridge, see half of earth,
And more than half of heaven, each side of us;
And here, upon the peak, at last, we pierce
The core where all sublimeness finds a center.
Not all, you say?—Then tell me where on earth
A lesser summit taps a larger view;—
See, south, the Berkshires, west of them, the Catskills,
Then, northward, up the far, wide Hudson valley,

ROADWAY THROUGH TORREY'S WOODS

"The aisle
That cleaves its glorious arch through Torrey's woods."—Page 54

The Adirondacks and the great Green range,
With, here and there, a knoll that gives a hint
Of highlands past the north Connecticut,
But, best of all, close by, the Housatonics,
And, walled against the east, this Greylock group
Heaped near like models to reveal in full
What wealth were in them all, if clearly seen.
One day like this that lifts a life on high
Where spirit seems to breathe its native air
Is better than to dream a score of nights
Where sleep is tinkering in its dark garage
The tire that gains mere physical repair.

And why should one descend? Why cannot now
This whirling world whisk off the willing spirit
And let it shoot through space, and go and go,
And never come again? Ah, why should fate
Leave thought entangled like an eagle here
Whose wings are bound, and feet can only crawl

GYMNASIUM, MORGAN HALL, AND LABORATORIES, WITH BERLIN ABOVE

"A higher sight
Than those on which contracted brows are bent
In library or laboratory."—Page 56

So slowly, and, when one so longs to fly,
So painfully?—And yet there sounds a bell
From out the valley. Why this call to work?
Why this reluctant journey down the hill?—
One scarcely dare look backward till, at last,
The autumn's gold and crimson in the aisle
That cleaves its glorious arch through Torrey's woods
Converts rebellious raving to remorse
That, even for an hour, one could forget
What beauty waits in low as well as high—
In all this realm, which nature, like a mother
That loves her child, has fashioned for his home.

Now back and down again to book and duty!
But who are these we meet?—Our comrades?—Oh,
Were they of us?—Alas, ye narrow souls,
Awake, and fly, like slaves that would be free!
Like those not made for soil but for the sky!
Bound down to petty tasks, more useless ye

DODD'S CONE, WITH BERLIN JUST BEYOND THE LEFT

"No spirit uses wings in heaven that never
Has learned of them, or longed for them, on earth."—Page 57

Than ships loosed never from their anchorage,
Nor sailed to ports for which they have been freighted.
Oh, think ye ends that souls were made to gain
Were ever reached by one who never breathed
A higher air, or saw a higher sight
Than those on which contracted brows are bent
In library or laboratory?—what?—
Does thought grow broader, whittled down to point
At microscopic nuclei of dust,
As if the world were by, not with them, built?—
As if the game of true success were played
By matching parts whose wholes are curios?
Nay, nay! Life's greatest gain is life itself;
And life, though lived in matter, is not of it;
Not of the object that our aims pursue,
Not of the body that pursues it, not
Of all the world of which itself and we
Are parts. Nay, all things that the eye can see
Are but vague shadows of reality

Cast on a frail environment of cloud,—
But illustrations of a general trend
Which only has enduring entity,
And is, and was, and always must be, spirit.

There is one only mission fit for man,—
To be a spirit ministering to spirit.
What fits for this?—A breath of higher sky,
A sight of higher scenes, at times, a strife
To mount by means impossible as yet.
What then?—Believe me that the spirit-air,
Like all the air above the soil we tread,
Takes to its own environment of light
No growth to burst there into flower and fruit
That does not get some start, and root itself,
Amid this lower world's deep, alien darkness,—
No spirit uses wings in heaven that never
Has learned of them, or longed for them, on earth.

WEST MOUNTAIN

NO hands of human art could be the first
To draw thy contour's broken lines against
The ended glory of the sunset sky.
No thought of human mind could ever plan,
Nor power uphold them. Nay, they must have sprung
To shape like this when some primeval frost
Chilled, caught, and crystallized the storm-swept waves
Of chaos that, arrested in their rage,
They fitly might portray the power beneath.
Stay there, great billows, all your boulder-drops
Held harmless where they hang; and all the spray
That might have dashed above them merely leaves
Of bush and forest, held to equal pause

WEST MOUNTAIN RANGE SEEN ACROSS HOOSICK RIVER

"Thy contour's broken lines against
The ended glory of the sunset sky."—Page 58

Save where, perchance, their fluttering, now and then,
Reveals a feeling that they once were free;
Stay there, suspended in the sky! But, sure
As days roll up the sun, an hour must come
When blazing blasts again shall shake these peaks,
Shall pile them higher, level them to plains,
Or melt them back to primal nothingness.
Meantime their mission shall be what it is:
To teach the world, not rest, but restlessness,—
The aspiration and the aim of art
That will not bide contented till the law
Of thought shall supersede the law of things,
And that which in the midnight of this world
Is but a dream shall be fulfilled in days
Where there is no more matter, only mind,
And beauty, born of free imagination,
Shall wait but on the sovereignty of spirit.

How oft in youth I gazed upon these heights

THE HOPPER FROM THE WEST

"*To teach the world, not rest, but restlessness,—*
The aspirations and the aim of art
That will not bide contented."—Page 60

Uprising to refresh a faltering faith
With wistful wonder and inspiring zest!
For this how often have I climbed these fields
From foot-hills to the Snow-hole; then, reclined
Against the western slope, looked off to give
A god-speed to the sun, and half-believed
The blue-tint sky-sheet, held to light against
The little town of learning that I loved,
Could bear away with photographic art
That which should give enlightenment to all
The western land through which it should be trailed.

How often, with a single friend, at times,—
At times with many,—I have lingered there;
And then, as if the very air breathed in
From broader, grander spaces could inspire
To thoughts of broader reach and grander import,
It seemed that there was naught in earth or sky
Or shop or study—did we deign descend

THE DOME, EAST MOUNTAIN AND WILLIAMSTOWN FROM STONE HILL

"The blue-tint sky-sheet, held to light against
The little town of learning that I loved."—Page 62

To this more common world—that was not all
Discussed if not decided. Nor confined
To bounds material were we. While the winds
Would whistle through the trees and round the rocks,
Our shouts would join them, now, perchance intent
To rouse loud echoes, dealt us like applause
For ungrown voices that would fit themselves
To bear the burden of the larger thought
For which the world beyond our youth seemed waiting;
And now, perchance, though seldom recognized,
Nor if, though subtly recognized, confessed,
Intent to gain fore-echoes, as it were,
Of that which should be college approbation
When words that to the air were now rehearsed
Should load the breath that carries freight to spirit,
And, borne along the clogs of others' pulses,
Should start that subtle surging in the veins
That proves the presence and completes the work
Of what impels to rhythmic rhetoric.

A CLASS-DAY SPEECH BETWEEN EAST COLLEGE AND THE LIBRARY

"Fit themselves
To bear the burden of the larger thought
For which the world beyond our youth seemed waiting."—Page 64

Then, warned by coming twilight we would turn,
And dare to lose the path, and plunge adown
Where, lured by rock or rill, we snapt apart
The network of the tangled underbrush,
As if to seize wild prey enmeshed therein—
Oh, happy days of youth! when empty sport
Of mere imagination—fancied game—
Could fill the hunter's pouch to overflowing!
Ay, how much better than the days of age—
Alas, I fear it, too, of modern youth
For whom, so rich in matter, poor in mind,
We manufacture implements of play
That clip at fancies till they all fit facts,
Plane joys to toys, and level games to gain,
Till every pleasure palls that fails to pay
In scales that rate life's worth by what it weighs
When all the spirit's buoyancy is lost.

How often with no friend except myself—

And he, at times, no friend—my feet have trod
These woods, the while my soul has longed to rise
Successfully as field and cliff and tree
To heights where one could dwell above a world
Whose common life appeared but all too common,
Its aims too low for love to seek and honor,
And yet a world in which my own self, too,
My body, spirit, all, bore part and share.

At times, these moods would pass like shadows trailed
Across the darkened meadows from far clouds
That swiftly sail the sky; at times, they came
To stay and root themselves like seeds that make
The brush more thorny with each season's growth.
And, oh, one night there was—can I forget it?
Not while the sky above and earth beneath
And all within my consciousness can last—
A night—and not the sole one—when, as if
My trembling human body were possessed

As by a demon of insane desire
To make its loneliness a fitting frame
For the deep loneliness of moods within,
I strolled, at midnight, through the shade-veiled elms,
Across the western rise, and down the hill.
What mattered how complained the creaking bridge,
Or bustling brook, disturbed by moon and me;
How marshalled into rows the ghost-like forms,
White-mantled in the hill-side cemetery?—
On, on, I pressed until, through haunted aisles
Of phantom-fashioned trees and looming mounds
That rose like mighty tombs of giants dead
Whose spirits yet seemed round me,—on I pressed
Until I reached that great right angle where
All farms and all things fertile lie below,
And only barren slopes of sterile rock
And trees that nature struggles to disown
Await the climber who would still move on.
And then I paused, and then I looked below,

MAIN STREET, WILLIAMSTOWN, LOOKING WEST

"*Through the shade-veiled elms,*
Across the western rise."—Page 68

And asked what could be there for me, and then
I looked above and asked what could be there.
Mistakes of others and my own, as well,
The land's financial stress, and that strange stress
Of human fellowship which sometimes makes
A fellow-worker, from his very zeal
To help another, elbow him aside,
Had seemed to force me to a precipice
As real as any that my feet could find;
And I must fight, or fall; and if I fought
Must fight myself and fight my every friend.
Oh, do not think that heaven moves all alike!
Some minds are sighted for a single aim,
And right for others may be wrong for them:
Oh, do not think the tempter, when he comes,
Proclaims his presence through acknowledged ill!
His most seducing tones may leave the lips
Of friends, or those who best may pose as friends;
His direst pitfall-paths mount up, nor hint

FOOTHILLS OF WEST MOUNTAIN FROM THE SIDE OF IT

"That great right angle where
All farms and all things fertile lie below."—Page 68

What crumbling crags their garden glories wreathe.
You deem that, at the crisis of his life,
It was a devil Jacob wrestled with?—
Nay, nay; Hosea's term for him was angel.

What but my own good angel could recall
The plans of others and the hopes of self
For early, easy, individual gain,
Position, influence, all that most men wish?
And what except this angel's foe was it
That made contend with these a force conjured
From inward consciousness of mind and body,
With all the doubts that shadowed thought in one,
And nerves that stirred revulsion in the other,
As if to make my spirit fly as far
From fellow-spirits as those mountain heights
Were far from all that should be in one's home?

The darkest night brings dawn. You ask the end?—

THE INNER HOPPER

"*As far*
From fellow-spirits as those mountain heights
Were far from all that should be in one's home."—Page 72

What if the purpose that my soul then formed
Remain still far too sacred to reveal?
What if I failed to do as friends had hoped?
What if I lived for years discredited?—
God knows that I have tried to live my life;
Nor from the trophies of the outside world
Have often sought or longed for recompense.

Oh, there are views of life that so depend
On inward entity at work beneath
The whole that has been, or that can be, shown
In what men merely see or hear or clutch,
That each and all seem hollow as mere husks.
To-day a man is young; to-morrow, old;
To-day in health, to-morrow in disease;
To-day enthroned, to-morrow in his grave;
And not alone to man these changes come.
The earth, our home, that so enduring seems,
The sun and stars that light it from above

Belong but to a camp, set up to-day,
And, on the morrow, fell'd and flung aside.

What then remains for life?—If one have aimed
For outward profit, nothing. If his thought
Have always, through the outer, sought the inner,
Then, not alone, the stars that shine on high
May all prove beacons, guiding on and on
To havens holding glories infinite,
But each frail flower that blooms for but an hour
May store in memory an ideal of beauty,
A sense of sweetness, that shall never leave him.

How vain to let affections all go forth
To things material, hard and heavy foes,
Whose mission is to fall at once and crush,
Or, through long labor, wear our spirits out!
How much more wise, behind the shape, to seek
The substance, and, in sympathy with it,

Learn of the life which never was created
But all things were created to reveal!
Ah, he who learns of this, and comes to live
In close communion with it, finds, at times,
When Nature whom he loves has laid aside
Her outer guise and clasps him to her heart,
That there are mysteries, not vague but clear,
Not formless but concrete, which, it must be,
That those alone can know, or have a right
To know, who always, like a faithful spouse,
Have kept their spirits to the spirit true.

And when these mounts, like mighty sheets above
Some slumbering giant soon to wake and walk,
Fall back to formlessness from which they came,
What wisdom shall be proved the choice of him
Whose eyes, in mercy shielded from the blaze
On which the soul alone can look and live,
Did not mistake mere grossness in the form

THE GREYLOCK RANGE FROM BERKSHIRE ROCK

"These mounts, like mighty sheets above
Some slumbering giant soon to wake and walk."—Page 76

For the true greatness of the inward force;
Whose mind too slightly taught, as yet, perhaps,
To read, beneath the picture, all the text,
Has yet surmised its meaning by that faith
Which, though its guide be instinct, dares to think,
And, though it bow to greet the symbol, yet
Lets not its magic cast a spell on sense!
To him the world seems but a transient school;
The universe, a university;
The blue that homes the sunlight and the stars,
A dome above a vast museum built
With glens for alcoves, plains for galleries,
And mounts for stairways, where he works and waits
Till comes the day he takes his last degree,
And then goes forth, and leaves all these behind,
Yet, in a true sense, holds them his forever.

COMMENCEMENT PROCESSION OF THE GRADUATING CLASS

"The day he takes his last degree,
And then goes forth, and leaves all these behind."—Page 78

FORD'S GLEN

WHEN first I followed up thy modest brook,
And left the northwest road, and came on thee,
How grand thy wood-crowned rocks appeared to be
Whose high-arched foliage heaven's dim light forsook!
But when, years later, I came back to look
On what so awed, I stood amazed to see
How small and shrunk, when shorn of every tree,
Were all that I for lofty cliffs mistook.
Then, in my college-town, I joined, once more,
The mates I so had honored in my youth.
Alas, in some, no mystery seemed to lurk
Where heights of promise had so loomed of yore!
Has life no sphere in which one finds, forsooth,
No wrong to nature wrought by man's mean work?

FORD'S GLEN

"How grand thy wood-crowned rocks appeared to be
Whose high-arched foliage heaven's dim light forsook!"—Page 80

A WOODLAND REVERIE

MY spirit, moving on to higher life,
At one sad place became a prey to strife;
For many oft would cross my path, and say
Their souls were moving in the better way;
And mere delusions had allured my feet
Along the course my faith had found so sweet.
At this, then, like a child, who turns to leave
The wranglings of his mates that make him grieve,
And rest his weary head upon that breast
Whose firm maternal love can bear it best,
My mind would turn to nature. Where but there
Could earth-born trouble find maternal care?
How long'd I to be hidden in the shade
Which the thick mantlings of her forests made,

THE HOPPER BROOK AND PATHWAY

"How longed I to be hidden in the shade
Which the thick mantlings of her forests made."—Page 82

And stay there undisturb'd by human thought,
Till sweet and soothing influences, brought
From sources far removed from man's control,
Should cool the burning fever of my soul!
So, for a season bidding men farewell,
I dwelt alone within a grove-grown dell.

Thence wandering forth one still clear night I found,
Beneath the moon that rose up, large and round,
Through vistas opening like some temple's aisles,
Great trees that arched the moveless air for miles.
Their spreading boughs, like shadowy rafters, lined
A star-filled dome, and oft, where foliage twined
In leafy fretwork round each trailing limb,
Flash'd bright with dew. Beneath them, fair though dim,
About the trees' wide trunks, in half seen bowers,
And pushing up through paths I trod, were flowers.
I seem'd their nature's lord; for, when my feet
Would crush them as I pass'd, they grew more sweet.

Anon a brook before my vision spread.
It seem'd a path that fairy feet could tread—
A path of silver, o'er a jewell'd ground
Which far away toward heaven-like mountains wound.
White mists were clinging to the brook's bright side.
Like spirit bands I thought them, whom its tide
Lull'd softly, couch'd amid the dark-leaved trees,
Awaiting bugles of the morning breeze,
And all the rush of daybreak sweeping by,
To bear them off in glory to the sky.

At times, mysterious whurs of winds and wings
And whisperings rose, with long-drawn echoings.
'T was music, lingering lovingly along
The breeze its fragrance freighted, like a song
From bay-bound barks in hazy autumn calms;
Nor less it sway'd my soul than slow low psalms,
Begun where organ blasts, that roar'd and rush'd
And made the air-waves roll, are swiftly hush'd,

And our thrill'd breasts inhale as well as hear
The awe-fill'd sweetness of the atmosphere.

How calmly did such sights and sounds impart
Their own deep calmness to my troubled heart!
With gratitude for each toy-touch of air
At play on my knit brow, I rested there.
But while I rested, lo, a stranger's form
Push'd through the white bars of the moonlight warm;
And with a soft slow movement near me came,
The while his face, tho' mute, smiled forth to claim
Full sympathy with me ere either spoke;
But soon his voice upon the silence broke:

"Who loves not (where all shapes and sounds we test
So charm us by the mysteries they suggest)
To throw aside—or strive to throw, at least--
Beliefs that satisfy our times, and feast
On superstition, and half credit freaks

A BROOK WITH THE DOME IN THE DISTANCE

"A path of silver o'er a jewelled ground
Which far away toward heaven-like mountains wound."—Page 85

With which fair fancy lured those dreamy Greeks.
Our older age has dropt the young world's joys,
And takes life earnestly; but it employs
Its ardor too much like an o'ergrown boy's,
Whose fist and arm, so often plied in strife,
But show his brain is weak. There are in life
Deep truths we value not. We rend apart
The forms of nature, but have little heart
To prize the hints to thought that meet our view.
And we forget that mysteries too are true;
And we forget the bourn beyond the blue;
And we forget about the silent pall;
And faith, which only holds the key of all."

He turn'd away; and I, who, well pleased, heard,
Could not but follow him. Without a word
We walk'd at first, like pilgrims near a shrine
They much revere, who, fill'd with thrills too fine
To throb through words accented, satisfy

MISSION PARK MONUMENT

"And we forget about the silent pall,
And faith which only holds the key of all."—Page 88

Their souls by feeling that the god is nigh.
"Alas, how many a thought," he said at last,
"Whose accents reach us through the rustling blast,
Whose meaning seems inscribed in circling rills,
And outlines of the rocks, the trees, the hills,
Is void of purport to the soul whose eyes
Have never yet been taught to know and prize
The purpose underneath! Forms can impart
Their import only to a feeling heart.

"All things created can for thought procure
No more than one's creative thoughts conjure
From out their forms. A likeness in them speaks
To like in us, the while our spirit seeks
Close contact with their own. For nature is
Transparent, and reveals her mysteries
To mortals only whose own sympathies
Make them transparent, opening all between
Themselves and nature, so that naught can screen

Her inmost meaning from their inmost mind.
Such spirits in earth's round horizon find
A glass divine—like that called Claude Lorraine's—
A strange, strong lens that deep within contains
Heaven's forms for thought, made small in scope to match
Man's comprehension. But how few can catch
Heaven's meaning through the forms. How few so wise
That they can look beneath the rustling guise
Of nature's vestments, and perceive below
The mind informing them, that makes them glow
With living truth. Alas, how many souls—
As blind to all that might be seen as moles—
Live, merely burrowing in earth's dust and gloom
To make their whole surroundings but a tomb
Wherein dead minds may lie. And yet how grand
Might life become, could all but understand
The thoughts that flow with brooks in every glade,
And grow to strengthen souls with every blade
Of verdure in the spring-time! Could they read

And know and use earth rightly, then, indeed,
Might heaven, too, open above them, while they too
Would cry like Paul, 'What wilt Thou have me do?'

"We mortal men may all be priests, high priests
Of nature, who may gather in from beasts
And birds and creeping things, and sky, and earth,
That which each form reveals of truth or worth,
And, in our higher natures, find a speech
To voice the praise that thought can frame for each.
Can aught on earth give right supremacy,
Except this priesthood of humanity?
Where burn the altar-fires that can make pure
Earth's wrong and dross, and through their flames insure
True worship for all forms of life or art,
If not enkindled in the human heart?

"Believe me, in humanity it is—
In charities, and kindly courtesies,

In eyes that sparkle, and in cheeks that blush
With love and hope and faith, which make them flush—
That all the bloom and fruitage of the earth
Attain their consummation and their worth.
Deep underneath our nature is a power
That, pushing forth through soil and seed and flower,
Moves on and out through all of sentient life,
And struggles most in man; nor can the strife
Be ended ever, till the force controls
The last least impulse that impels our souls.

. . . . . .

"'T is time the Spirit of the living force,
Whose currents through the frame of nature course,
And make the earth about, and stars above,
The body and abode of infinite Love,
That breathes its own breath through our waiting frames
With each fresh breeze that blows, and ever aims

Our lesser lives where all we call advance
But plays within its lap of circumstance,—
'T is time the Spirit should be known, in truth,
Inspiring hope in age and faith in youth,
And bringing each that charity benign,
Which in us all would make us all divine."

He paused, then said: "Each reverential star
Draws back where comes the sun. My home is far.
Now that our feet approach once more the dell
Where first we met, I must away; farewell."
And scarce I heard this, ere he had withdrawn.
But I, who walk'd and watch'd the opening dawn,
Moved homeward like one waking from a dream;
And, as my mind recall'd my joy supreme
To see bright visions that had fill'd the sky,
I had resolved, long ere the sun was high,
That whatsoever truth had thus been shown
Should not be left to bless myself alone.

A WALK IN A WILLIAMSTOWN PARK

"But I who walked and watched the opening dawn
Moved homeward like one waking from a dream."—Page 94

AMONG THE MOUNTAINS

MY mountains, how I love your forms that stand
So beautiful, so bleak, so grim, so grand.
Your gleaming crags above my boyhood's play,
Undimmed as hope, rose o'er each rising day.
When now light hope has yielded place to care,
O'er steadfast work I see you steadfast there,
And when old age, at last, shall yearn for rest,
By your white peaks will each aspiring glance be blest.

How bright and broad, with ever fresh surprise,
The scenes ye brought allured my youthful eyes.
Now, when rude hands those views of old assail,
When growing towns have changed the lower vale,

THE GREYLOCK RANGE FROM BELLOW'S PIPE

"How I love your forms that stand
So beautiful, so bleak, so grim, so grand."—Page 96

When other friends are lost or sadly strange,
Ye stand familiar still, ye do not change.
And when all else abides as now no more,
In you I still may see the forms I loved of yore.

Ye mounts deserve long life. Your peaks at dawn
Catch light no sooner from the night withdrawn,
Than those ye rear see truth, when brave men vow
To serve the serf, and bid the despot bow.
In vales below, if tyrants make men mild,
The weak who scale your sides learn winds are wild,
That beasts break loose, and birds awaken'd flee,
As if in deepest sleep they dream'd of being free.

High homes of manhood, human lips can phrase
No tribute fit to echo half your praise.
By Piedmont's church and Ziska's rock-wall'd see,
By Swiss and Scot who left their children free,

GREYLOCK FROM A SHOULDER OF THE DOME

"When other friends are lost or sadly strange,
Ye stand familiar still, ye do not change."—Page 98

By our New England, when she named him knave
Who, flank'd by bloodhounds, chased his fleeing slave,
Stand ye like them, whose memories, ever grand,
Tower far above earth's lords, as ye above its land.

Ay, stand like monuments in lasting stone
To souls as lofty as the world has known.
Ye fitly symbol, when with kindling light
The dawn and sunset gild your summits white,
The glories of their pure, aspiring worth
Who aim'd at stars to feed the hopes of earth;
And fitly point where they, in brighter skies,
View grander scenes than yours where your heights cannot rise.

1918

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 016 165 710 4